BURMA GAZETTEER

MERGUI DISTRICT

VOLUME A

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COMPILED BY

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CHAPTER I.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION.

Boundaries, configuration, hill and river systems.

The southernmost district of Burma and of the Tenasserim Division, extending on the mainland from the Myin-hmo-let-kat mountain (13° 28′ N.) on the border of the Tavoy district in the north, to the mouth of the Pakchan river (9° 58′ N.) and the Isthmus of Kra in the south, and including the islands of the Mergui Archipelago from Tavoy Island to the Aladdin Isles in 9° 38′ N. On the east it is conterminous with Siam, and at one point, in 99° 40′ E., the gulf of Siam is only ten miles away. On the west the islands stretch out as far as 97° 30′ E. As regards the islands off the mouth of the Pakchan river the line of demarcation between the British and Siamese islands runs to the south-west from the southernmost point of Victoria Island and passes to the north of Saddle Island and Delisle Island and to the south of Auriol Island and Christie's Islands. The islands to the south of that line are Siamese and those to the north are British. The total area is 9,789 square miles.

North of Mergui town the valley of the Great Tenasserim river is separated from the sea by a mountain range culminating in Myin-hmo-let-kat, 6,800 feet high, on the northern border. Between this range and the coast is a fertile plain intersected by small streams running east and west and to a great extent cultivated. The rest of the district is of a very different character. There are no mountain ranges of any importance, and such level lands as exist are mostly covered by the sea at high tide, or, if inland, flooded during the rains. With the exception of the valleys of the Tenasserim and the Upper Pakchan, this part of the district is generally a network of low hills fringed with mangrove swamps.

The principal rivers are—(*a*) the Great Tenasserim, rising far to the north, in Tavoy, and entering the district about 140 miles above Tenasserim village,

where it doubles back on itself and flows into the sea, forming a delta round Mergui town; (*b*) its tributary, the Little Tenasserim, which joins it at Tenasserim village after a northerly course from the Siam border; (*c*) the Lenya, to the south-west of the Little Tenasserim and nearly parallel with it but flowing direct into the sea south of Mergui, after a bend to the north-west; and (*d*) the Pakchan, rising in the same neighbourhood as the Lenya but flowing south to Victoria Point. The district is thus, with the exception of the Palaw Township, where a few streams run from east to west, a system of rivers flowing from north to south or south to north, except where a bend is needed to enable them to reach the sea. The Mergui Archipelago stretches down the entire length of the coast, numbering 804 islands of every size, from King Island, with an area of 170 square miles, to mere rocks rising abruptly from the sea. Nearly all are forest-clad and most are hilly, often fringed with mangrove swamps but occasionally displaying a yellow beach of sand or pebble. With the exception of King Island, which is partly cultivated by Burmese and Karens, Tavoy Island, and some fishing villages, more or less deserted during the monsoon, on the coasts of Kisseraing and Sellore, the islands are almost uninhabited but for the Salôns or sea-gypsies who wander among them.*

A remarkable feature of the coast scenery is the presence of precipitous limestone rocks towering sheer out of the water for several hundred feet and forming caves, some of which recall the interior of a Gothic cathedral, while others enclose lakes accessible only at low tide through a tunnel in the rock. They are the home of the tiny swift that builds the edible nests of commerce.

Of the total area of the district, 9,789 square miles, an area of 596 square miles only has been cadastrally surveyed. The actual area under cultivation is only 86,260 acres, 1·4 per cent. of the whole district. The full force of the South-West monsoon strikes the coast considerably to the north of the Mergui District, consequently its rainfall is not so heavy as that experienced in Tavoy. The southerly situation of Mergui makes a difference of between 50—60 inches of

* In the south of the district are many Malay names and some Siamese names of which the spelling is somewhat indeterminate. In the Archipelago are many names, a few of which, like Kisseraing, are undeniable corruptions of Burmese; but in other cases, as for instance King Island which in Burmese is Payi-gyun, the English name bears no reference to the Burmese name. Many of the islands have no Burmese but only an English name. Some of the islands have no name.

rainfall as compared with Tavoy, the average being 162·77 inches. It is strange that whereas the 100 miles difference in latitude between Tavoy and Mergui should be responsible for a difference of over 50 inches in the rainfall, yet the additional difference of 160 miles between Mergui and Victoria Point should produce no difference whatsoever. The rainfall commences earlier, finishes later and there is a greater tendency for rain in the dry months than in other Lower Burma districts.

The average is adequate and favourable for both paddy and garden cultivation.

Occasionally it produces floods in the narrower valleys (Big Tenasserim and Pakchan). Very rarely there is a shortage at a critical period of the year, but such experiences are infrequent and generally confined to a comparatively small area.

Fauna Mammals.

The following are to be found in the district:—

Gibbons (Myauk-lwe-gyaw).
Flying Lemur (Myauk-hlaung-mi-to).
Jungle-dog (Taw-Kwe).
The Flying Fox (Lin-wet).
Civet-cat (Kyaung-pyan).
Tiger, leopard cat, leopard, bear, elephant, boar, mouse-deer, sambhar, barking-deer (gyi), bison, wild cow, tapir, rhinoceros, single and double-horned.

The bison (Bos gaurus) found in Mergui District is said to differ slightly from that found in Burma proper.

Reptiles.

Crocodile, turtle, python, cobra, bungarus.

Ichthyology.

The best fish, from an edible point of view, found here is the Pomfret or Nga-môn* or Nga-panaung;

Ka-Ku-Yan	(King-fish)	Nga-Tha-Lauk (Hilsa)
Nga-Ta-Yaw	(do.)	Nga-pôn-na (Mango-fish)
Ka-Tha-Baung or Nga-Tha-Baung	(do.)†	Nga-kwe-Lya (Mergui sole)

Mahseer (Nga-Thaing) abound in the upper reaches of the Tenasserim and its tributaries.

The Kakadet, a large perch, is also found in the Tenasserim river. Other fish found in the sea are the Nga-pyet (Indian Whiting), Ngapalwe (Sil aga), Ngayan Panaw, Ngayan-khoung, Ngayan-daing (these three latter all of the Snake-head variety), Nga-gaung (Cat-fish) and no doubt a host of others.

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* This fish is also known as Nga-Mu, a Tavoy corruption of Nga Môn.

† Ka = Nga = fish in Talaing.

CHAPTER II.

HISTORY AND ARCHÆOLOGY.

Mergui, for most of its known history, has been a Siamese province, with its capital at Tenasserim. The latter may possibly be identical with Tung Sun, mentioned in the Chinese annals of the Liang dynasty (502—506 A.D.) as the terminus of a trade route on the western side of the Malay Peninsula. It is certain that for hundreds of years Tenasserim was the gateway of the most direct route to the Far East, commodities being brought to it by sea from India and the Persian Gulf to meet those carried overland from Siam and China. From early in the 15th century, when the port was visited by Nicolo di Conti, the Venetian, till the massacre of 1687 described below, the place is constantly mentioned by travellers and merchants as a great port. Abdur Razzak of Samarkand mentions the inhabitants of Tenasserim among the people to be seen at Ormuz in 1442. Early in the 16th century it is described in the voyages of Tristan d'Acunha as the first mart for spices in India, and Duarto Barbosa says its ships were to be seen at Cape Guardafui. Sea-going vessels were then apparently able to reach Tenasserim, though it is now 44 miles up the river, and goods were carried thence overland to Ayuthia and the Siamese Gulf. Mergui, however, seems always to have been its seaport, for it is mentioned by Master Cesar Frederick in 1568.

Mergui has ever been the battle-ground of the rival kingdoms of Burma and Siam. As Cesar said in 1568, "it of right belongeth to the kingdom of Siam," but whenever there was a strong Burmese king it became a Burmese province.

The earliest record is an inscription recently found near the Shinkodaw pagoda, about ten miles from Mergui. It is dated 631 B.E. (1269 A.D.), and records a gift to the pagoda by Nga Pôn, the royal usurer of Tayôkpye-min, "the king who fled from the Chinese," who reigned at Pagan from 1248 to 1285 A.D.

Siam was repeatedly invaded by the Burmese under Bayin Naung, first as general and then as king, between 1548 and 1569, and in the last year the capital Ayuthia was sacked.

It is during this period that Cesar refers to Tenasserim as being in the kingdom of Pegu. In 1587 Bayin Naung's son, the Yuva Rajah, attempted to imitate the exploit of his

father, but his army was destroyed and another expedition ended in disaster in 1593. Soon after this the Burmese kingdom was broken up and Siam enjoyed peace, so far as the Burmese were concerned, for 150 years, until the rise of Alaungpaya. In 1683 the King of Siam appointed Mr. Richard Burneby, an ex-servant of the East India Company, as governor of Mergui, with Mr. Samuel White as Shahbandar, or Port Officer of Mergui and Tenasserim. A number of English traders were attracted to the place by these appointments, and there were also French, Dutch and Portuguese settlements, but the East India Company at that time claimed the monopoly of all trade carried on by Englishmen with the East, and the Council at Madras determined to eject the interlopers. At the same time King James the Second was growing anxious at the establishment of French influence at the Siamese capital, and in 1687 the "Curtana" arrived outside Mergui with letters declaring war on Siam, pending payment of compensation for injuries done to the Company's trade, and requiring Messrs. Burneby and White to send all the English in Mergui on board the frigate. A truce of sixty days was at the same time allowed. During the truce the Siamese, under White's directions, strengthened their defences and staked the river. An attempt by the Commander of the "Curtana" to remove the stakes resulted in a general massacre of the Englishmen in Mergui, only three escaping out of sixty. After this the French became supreme and fortified themselves in the town; but in 1688, as a result of a palace revolution, they were attacked and driven out. For the next seventy years Siam was torn by incessant civil war, and a further blow was inflicted on the trade of Mergui by the presence of pirates of all nationalities.

In 1757 Alaungpaya had become all powerful in Burma and had founded the city of Rangoon.

The usual invasion of Siam followed, at the end of 1759, by way of Mergui and Tenasserim, which were occupied without resistance. Ayuthia was reached, but the siege was abandoned owing to the illness of Alaungpaya, who died on the march back to Burma. In 1775, however, another army was sent by his son Sinbyushin under the Burmese General Maha Thihathura, and after a siege of fifteen months the city was utterly destroyed. The Siamese founded a new capital at Bankôk, and Tavoy and Mergui remained in possession of the Burmese.

In 1786 Siam was invaded by Bodawpaya, but without success, and in 1792 the people of Tavoy rebelled and delivered up the town to Siam. It was soon retaken, and

Mergui, which had been successfully held by the Burmese Governor, was relieved. Another rebellion was crushed in 1808. Soon after this friction arose between the British and Burmese Governments. War was declared in 1824, and resulted in the annexation of the Arakan and Tenasserim provinces in 1826. In October 1824 the East India Company's cruiser "Mercury," with Lieutenant-Colonel Miles and 370 men of the 89th regiment, appeared before Mergui and the fort was carried, with the loss of six men killed and two officers and twenty-two men wounded.

In 1825 a Siamese force appeared and ravaged the country about Tenasserim, but was driven off, and the present Mergui subdivision, almost depopulated by incessant wars and rebellion, at last enjoyed a long period of tranquillity.

The principal pagodas are the Legyunsimi at Mergui, built in 1785 on the site of a smaller one erected soon after Alaungpaya's invasion, and the Zedawun pagoda, said to date from 1208, situated on a hill ten miles up the Tenasserim river.

CHAPTER III.

THE PEOPLE.

When the British occupation of the country took place the population of the district had been so much attenuated by guerilla warfare between the Burmese and Siamese that it was estimated at 10,000 inhabitants only.

The population then increased from 47,192 in 1872 to 56,559 in 1881, 73,748 in 1891, and 88,744 in 1901—an increase of 41,552, or 88 per cent. The principal statistics of area and population in 1901 are given below:—

Township.	Area in square miles.	No. of villages.	Population.	Persons per square mile.
Mergui ..	1,608	154	31,083	19
Palaw ...	1,668	91	22,442	13
Tenasserim ...	2,008	112	10,712	5
Bôkpyin ...	2,278	21	7,255	3
Maliwun ...	2,224	17	5,265	2

Two-thirds of the total population of the district is agricultural. There is little immigration, and the mining coolies

brought from China do not, as a rule, settle in the country. Except along the coast, the inhabitants are very scattered. Burmese is almost universally spoken in the Mergui township, where the people call themselves Burmans.

Burmese.

The pure Burman is seldom found except in Palaw Township, and even there some of the Burmese admit kinship with pure Siamese. In other parts of the district the inhabitants speak a dialect understood with difficulty by an ordinary Burman, with some Siamese words and idioms, the most remarkable of the latter being the inversion of the compound verbs. The hard consonants are retained as in Arakanese, but the "r" and "h" and final consonants practically disappear. In Palaw an even less intelligible dialect of Burmese is spoken by two-thirds of the population, the other third speaking Karen. In Tenasserim 43 persons out of a hundred talk Burmese, 40 Siamese, 16 Karen, and the remainder Chinese. Further south Burmese tends to disappear entirely, Siamese, Malay and Chinese being the languages most heard. About 87 per cent of the people are Buddhists. The bulk of the non-Buddhist population are Musalmans: they numbered about 7,000 in 1901.

There were nearly 57,000 Burmans in 1901, and about 2,000 Chinese and nearly 9,000 Siamese. A considerable proportion of the population in the town and mines is Baba or half-Chinese, the men retaining the pig-tail but talking Burmese or Siamese, and the women wearing the dress of their mothers. Of the Musalmans between 2,000 and 3,000 are Malays and the rest nearly all Zarbadis. Living in boats among the islands in a very low stage of civilization is a wild people of obscure origin, called by the Burmese Salôn, by the Malays Orang Basin, by the Siamese Chaunam (waterfolk), and by themselves Maw Ken (drowned in the sea).

The Salôns are expert divers and swimmers, and the supply of green snails and bêche-de-mer is obtained entirely through them. Outside Mergui the Burmese are husbandmen or fishermen, the Siamese mostly agriculturists with a few miners, the Chinese usually miners, and the Karens all agriculturists.

The Christian population in 1901 numbered 2,215. Of these, 2,135 were natives, mostly Karens, in the Palaw and Mergui townships, where the Baptist Mission started work in 1837.

The general distribution of races is roughly :—

Burmese—North and centre.
Karens—Extreme north and east.
Siamese—East, centre and south.
Malays—South seaboard.
Salôns—Archipelago.
Chinese and Natives of India—Distributed.

alôns
elungs.*

The Salôns would seem to be connected, at least by their language, with the Malays, yet their hereditary dread of that people, and their undoubtedly timid and unwarlike character, would seem to point to a different origin, and it is most probable that before the sixth century of our era they occupied the country now inhabited by the Malays, and were driven out by the gradual advance of this race from Sumatra, and sought refuge in the islands where they are now found.

They are very low in the scale of civilization. Somewhat loose in their morals they yet maintain family relations with firmness. They are kind-hearted, confiding and timid. In physical appearance they are between Malays and Burmans. An American Baptist Missionary, Mr. Brayton, reduced their language to writing, established a school, and brought out some school books in the Salôn tongue. The language has a strong relation to Malay, but according to a recent view it is an entirely independent form of speech most nearly related to the Cham of Cambodia. A glossary of terms in common use will be found in Burma Volume II of the Ethnographic Survey of India—" The Salôns " by Mr. W. J. S. Carrapiett—to which reference is generally invited for detailed information in regard to this people.

According to Dr. Stevens "they have a traditional belief in the existence of a God whom they call 'Tu-da, whom they regard as the greatest and best of beings, who created all things in heaven and on earth. They have also a distinct tradition of the flood, 'after which,' they say, 'God came down from heaven and assigned to the different nations and tribes their habitations and employments.' "

As a rule they live in their boats, but during the heavy rains as many as 200 are found in encampments on the beaches of some of the islands, yet they rarely remain in one spot for more than a week at a time. When so

* [The word 'Selung' is not known locally. It is therefore now abandoned in this Gazetteer being a relic of the unscientific transliteration of the past.—Ed.]

encamped they construct temporary sheds made of poles cut from the forests, walled and roofed with mats made out of the leaves of a species of palm which, when not in use, can be rolled up and easily stowed away, and which form an admirable protection both against sun and rain. Some content themselves with laying out the movable decks of their boats upon poles and cross-pieces attached thereto, so as to form a platform about six feet long by four feet wide on which a whole family will gather at nights, the thick branches of overhanging trees serving for shelter. The rapidity with which a whole camp is moved is striking, and Mr. Benjamin, who lived amongst them for some time, relates that on one occasion the beach was clear within fifteen or twenty minutes.

Their boats are peculiar. The stem of a tree of from 18 to 30 feet in length is hollowed out and opened by being placed over a slow fire and gradually stretched, thwarts being inserted to keep it open. At intervals, along the two upper edges, long bamboo spikes are inserted, and on these are, as it were impaled, one above the other, the long pithy leaf stems of a plant of the palm family, and the sides are thus increased in height by from two to three feet. The only tools employed are an adze, a cleaver, and an augur. A portion of the boat is covered by a roof of mats made of palm leaves. The sail, which is very large, is made of palm leaves sewn together edgewise; the ropes are of twisted ratan. The boats are extremely light and, being admirably modelled, fly before the slightest breeze.

Their food is rice, which they receive from Malays, Chinese, and others, in exchange for sea-slugs, mats, etc. Fish and shell-fish and wild pigs are sometimes caught by their numerous dogs; when their stock of rice is exhausted, as sometimes happens, they eat roots and leaves; a few have fowls.

Their resources are Pwenyet (*see* below, page 12), tônnwe ထုံးနွယ်။, the botanical name for which is not known, but which is in some demand amongst the Chinese for making joss sticks—*taung-than-gyi* တောင်သန်ကြီး. (Premna integrifolia) used in preparing cosmetics, turtle shells, pearls, bees-wax, and mat weaving. The mats are woven by the women, especially in the rainy season, when fishing is almost impracticable. In the neighbourhood of Mergui they supply house-posts and firewood. The sea-slugs, or bêches-de-mer, they dig up during the North-East monsoon or from November to May, at low water. The 'bee-hunting' season lasts about a

month. Before commencing a hunt a '*po-ti*' or 'spirit man' lights a wax candle and chants before it an incantation to the spirits of the forests and mountains, frequently interrupting the strains by heavy potations of arrack which he calls the 'honey water' and without which the ceremony would be comparatively unavailing. The combs are found suspended from the branches of trees and often within two or three feet from the ground. A fire is kindled underneath, and when the bees have been driven away the comb is secured. On an average each comb furnishes from two to three rupees' worth of wax; the honey is less valuable.

Some of the produce of the islands is brought to Mergui and to the villages on the coast of the mainland; but much is bartered with Chinese and Malay visitors in exchange for rice, salt and cloth, and, it is suspected, for liquor and opium, though the latter practice is illegal and strictly forbidden.

Of the Chinese and Malays they are in exceeding great fear, and relate accounts of slave-hunting expeditions by these races and, indeed, by Burmans in old days, which bear melancholy marks of truthfulness.—(*British Burma Gazetteer*, Volume I, 1880.)

"They are in a more civilized state now and constantly "come to Mergui and sell their goods to great advantage, "but such is the moral degradation of these people and "tendency to vice, that although, after selling their goods, "they may have some hundreds of rupees, they seldom go "back to their villages with much more than a large supply "of spirits and opium, being cheated out of the rest by "some of the bad characters of the town, who are "constantly on the look-out for them.

"On one of the islands near Mergui are a few "families of these people who have taken to cultivation."—(Lieutenant Burn's report in Report on Revenue Administration dated 8th March 1858.)

Since the above accounts were first written, very little change has taken place in the habits of the Salôns.

They wear clothes when in town, but not in their huts or boats, and they now carry out a certain amount of cultivation on various islands, which, however, they leave after sowing, returning only for the harvest.

The Salôns are a timid people, almost certainly aboriginal, very harmless and free from crime. There is a somewhat similar tribe in the Malay States which, however, now lives far up the rivers, having been driven from the sea by Malay pirates.

CHAPTER IV.

AGRICULTURE.

The condition of agriculture, apart from garden cultivation in this district, is very backward. There are many reasons to account for this. The Burmese population is not indigenous to the soil. It is descended from the camp followers of the army of invasion of Alaungpaya who settled down here when he wrested the country from the Siamese between 1759 and 1762 A.D. For the sixty years that intervened prior to the British occupation there was a period of uninterrupted guerilla warfare between the two races, in which the population was nearly extirpated. When peace followed the inhabitants of the district were estimated at 10,000 only, barely more than one to the square mile. It was scarcely possible that advanced methods of agriculture would spring up among a people exhausted by long continued warfare, and with an extreme shortage of labour. These conditions operated in different directions, according to racial predilection, to create the existing customs. Since that period, although population and wealth have greatly increased, they have been diverted into other channels—pearling, fishing and garden cultivation, and latterly rubber cultivation, so that paddy cultivation has not secured its proportionate share of the increase. Moreover, the adverse conditions of communication, and the absence of a properly organized wholesale market for surplus produce, have failed to stimulate improved methods, and have tended to stereotype the backward conditions that previously prevailed.

With an increase of population, improved communications, better organized markets and enhanced revenue, a gradual improvement in agricultural methods may be anticipated.

With so widely scattered an area and such diversities of races the methods of agriculture pursued naturally vary greatly. The most noticeable variation is the practice of transplanting and sowing of crops which follows strictly racial divisions.

The Siamese invariably transplant, whereas the Burmans and Karens seldom do so. The Burmans seldom plough except in the neighbourhood of Palaw and Mergui, but invariably harrow the soil. With the Karens and Siamese even this elementary preparation is not made. A few days

prior to sowing or planting, as the case may be, herds of buffaloes are driven over the fields until the surface has been reduced to a thick muddy paste, which is then considered ready for the crop.

This practice is also largely a question of situation, the practice of treading the soil being followed in the remote portion of the district, and closely allied to this practice is that of intermittent cultivation.

Garden cultivation. Different conditions prevail with respect to garden cultivation. The influence of the Chinese has tended towards a thorough system of garden culture, especially in the immediate neighbourhood of Mergui. The planting of trees is systematic, and the value of manuring appreciated, the by-products of the fishing industry being in great demand in this respect.

CHAPTER V.

FORESTS AND MINERALS.

Practically the whole district, with the exception of about 139 square miles of cultivation and perhaps a similar extent of old *taungya* clearings, is under dense forest. Of this a large part, approaching perhaps a thousand square miles, is mangrove. The area treated as forest by the department is about 5,600 square miles in extent, and only 330 square miles of this total are reserved.

The forests are not generally valuable and teak is unknown, but the lofty "Kanyin" tree (*Dipterocarpus laevis*) yields an oil largely used in the manufacture of torches, the wood of the "Thingan" (*Hopea odorata*) is, owing to its elasticity, unequalled for boats, and "Kyathran" or Pinle-on (*Carapa moluccensis*), "Anan" (*Fagræa fragrans*), "Hmanthin" (*Curcuma roscolama*), "Kanazo" (*Bassia longifolia*), and "Koko" (*Albizzia Lebbek*) are all useful timbers. "Pyingado" (*Xylia dolabriformis*) is plentiful in the extreme north. "Kalamet" (*Santalum sp.*), found on a branch of the Little Tenasserim on the border of Siam, is priced for its fragrance. The precious scented wood-aloes, or eagle-wood, the deceased heart wood of the "Akyaw" tree (*Aquillaria agallocha*), is still an article of commerce, though not so plentiful as formerly, and sappan-wood, once the most famous product of the district, exists in the Tenasserim Township, but is not now worked. "Pwenyet,"

the resinous nest of the *Trigona læviceps*, or dammer bee, makes valuable caulking for boats when mixed with earth-oil.

Rubber exists in a wild state in some parts of the district, and the *Hevea Braziliensis* was introduced by Government from Kew Gardens in 1878, and is yielding good results in the Government Rubber Plantation near Mergui. Attracted by its success a number of private individuals and syndicates have started rubber plantations in the district, particularly in King Island and at Victoria Point; and it is confidently anticipated that the production of rubber will be before long one of the leading industries of the district. Rubber.

The outside of the stem of the *Phrynium dichotomum*, called by the Burmese "Thin," is exported in large quantities to Danubyu, to be made into the mats for which that place is famous. The vast mangrove swamps are being made use of, their bark yielding a kind of tannin which is known in Europe as cutch, though inferior to the genuine article, the produce of the *Acacia catechu*.

The existence of tin in the Mergui District came to the notice of the Government of India soon after the annexation of Tenasserim. Favourable reports were made in 1841—43 by Colonel Tremenheere, and in 1855 by Dr. Oldham, but without practical results. Tin.

In 1873 the mining rights in the Maliwun Township were leased to a Rangoon firm, who introduced European machinery, but retired in 1877 after incurring heavy loss. This is explained partly by the want of good expert advice, and partly by the employment of Indian coolies who were unable to stand the hard work and exposure. Various officers have since then been deputed to examine and report on the mines.

The backward condition of Maliwun, so far as Chinese immigrants are concerned, was perhaps due in the past to the unsuitability of our laws, which the Government was reluctant to suspend in so comparatively small an area for the sake of an industry which had so far attained no great importance. In 1895 The Jelubu Mining Company started operations, but used only Chinese methods for the extraction of tin, and retired in 1898. In 1901 a concession of four square miles was granted, which was cancelled in 1903, as the concessionaires had not found sufficient capital to work the lode.

The Burma Development Syndicate started work with modern electrical plant in 1907, and the course of a few

years may be expected to show their success or failure, with a consequent elevating or depressing effect on the future of tin mining in Mergui District.

A syndicate obtained and worked some land in the neighbourhood of Bôkpyin (Yangwa) but failed, the supply of water being insufficient. Up to date, except on a small scale by Chinamen, tin mining as an industry has not succeeded on account of deficient labour supply, and want of sufficient water in the dry season, and lack of communications.

Tin ore may be found (i) in the original lode (this has not yet been done), (ii) in the masses of decomposed rocks on the sides of hills, (iii) deposited beneath a layer of silt on low-lying lands to which it has been carried by the action of water, or (iv) in the bed of streams. Of these four classes the first can only be worked with the aid of explosives and expensive machinery. The second class can be worked on a large scale by sluicing away the side of a hill with water forced through pipes. The Chinese are described as "picking out the eyes" of the hills with picks and crowbars, thus obtaining a rich outturn with comparatively little labour, but spoiling the ground for those who come after them. Their usual method, however, is *lampan* working in which a small stream is diverted to the piece of land to be worked and the 'overburden' or overlying earth removed by the force of the water assisted by cross channels cut in the shape of a gridiron.

In the third method the overburden has to be removed by manual labour before the ore can be extracted. Here again the ground is apt to be spoilt by the practice of fossicking, in which, instead of the overburden being removed continuously, pits about six feet wide are sunk into the mass and allowed to fall in after the wash dirt of tin-bearing mass has been removed from the bottom.

No objection can be urged against the practice of panning, or washing in the beds of streams, the last of the four classes. This has been compared to gleaning and is carried on chiefly by Malays and Siamese women who are said sometimes to earn a dollar* a day in this fashion.

The ore, after being cleaned by the action of running water, is smelted at or near the mines in clay furnaces, and exported to Penang or Rangoon in blocks weighing about a hundredweight.

Tin is principally worked—

(*a*) In the Victoria Point Subdivision at Maliwun.

(*b*) In the Mergui Subdivision—

(i) Bôkpyin Township, at Karathuri, Yangwa and Yengan.

(ii) Tenasserim Township, at Thabawleik.

(iii) Mergui Township, at Kyaukpyu and Yamôn.

The labour is mainly Chinese, but some of the small outlying mines are worked by Siamese. The monthly wage for unattached Chinese coolies is Rs. 20 with board and lodging, but the large mines are worked by labour supplied under contract, the usual rate being 100 Straits dollars a year, all found. The importation is done through the Chinese Protectorate at Penang, the coolies being bound by written contract to work for periods extending from one to three years. The outturn of tin for some years past has been about 60 tons annually, the royalty on which is rather over Rs. 3,500.

Coal is not worked in the district, but a field between Kawmapyin and Heinlat has been examined by the Geological Survey and found to contain a bed of about one million tons of coal of a quality much superior to Indian coal; and it is probable that this coal-field may at an early date be worked by a company. Coal occurs on the Great Tenasserim at Thamihlakyun as well as at the places mentioned above, and on the Little Tenasserim at Theinkun. Coal.

As in the case of tin, the success of one company may be expected to lead to successful enterprise by others, or the failure of the first company may give the industry a set-back from which it will take long to recover.

The district yields about 500 tons of salt yearly produced at Palaw in the Palaw Township. More than 50 families are employed in the brine-boiling business. The water of a tidal creek is diverted into fields of impervious clay in which it is confined by means of small ridges. The fields are of different heights and the water remains a day or two in each until the evaporation caused by the heat of the sun converts it into brine. It is then run into a tank from which it is eventually ladled into an iron pan, four feet square, placed over a furnace. The salt is scraped from the bottom of the pan. Duty is levied at eight annas a maund of 82 lbs. The industry was only introduced in 1896. Salt.

Gold exists in many places, but not, so far as it is known, in paying quantities. A little is generally found in the tin after smelting. Gold.

A practically inexhaustible supply of iron, though not of very good quality, is reported to exist on the island of Kalagyun, about eight miles west of Mergui by sea. Iron.

Other metals. On Maingay's* Island Mr. Mark Frayar in 1872 reported the existence of a valuable lode of lead (galena) containing 11 oz. per ton of silver but most of it below the sea. An outcrop inland, however, has recently been found and some of the ore has been sent to England for examination. Graphite exists on the almost unexplored island of Kisseraing and manganese at places on the Great Tenasserim.

Wolfram or wolframite is found to exist along with the tin in the ore exported from Maliwun by the Burma Development Syndicate: it is known to occur elsewhere in the district, and the successful discoveries of this metal in the neighbouring district of Tavoy have excited keen interest here. Numerous prospecting licenses have been applied for, and it is expected that before long it will be proved whether or not such wolfram deposits as exist can be profitably worked. The marble islands, between Kisseraing and Domel, contain marble of a coarse quality suitable for building: but it cannot be said that much is known at present of the mineral resources of the Archipelago.

CHAPTER VI.

OCCUPATIONS AND TRADE.

The richness of Mergui in natural products is responsible for the comparative absence of arts or manufactures. Agriculture and garden cultivation form the occupation of the majority of the population.

The most important industry, probably, is the manufacture of dried fish and *ngapi*, the processes of which are described below: the above are commodities of established reputation, and have been exported from this district, in a single year, to the extent of 8½ millions of pounds valued at over six lakhs of rupees. There is a considerable export of thatching material manufactured from the leaves of dani palm (*Nipa fruticans*). There is also an important silk-weaving industry at Mergui. The silk yarn is imported, and woven locally into cloth for wearing apparel, both for men and women: and the cloth so woven, besides its handsome

* This name was presumably given to this island by the naval officers who charted the Archipelago. The Burmese local name is ထေရှု.

and varied colouring, is widely celebrated for its strength and durability.

Fish is exported in three forms and manufactured as described briefly below.

Ngapi, salt fish, dried prawns.

Ngapi. The Mergui variety of *ngapi* is made entirely from small shrimps, no fish entering into its manufacture. *Ngapi* is a peculiar kind of fish-paste; salting, pounding and fermenting are the three main steps in its manufacture. The fresh shrimps are sprinkled with salt and spread on a mat in the sun; they are then collected and pounded, more salt being added, and placed in jars to ferment.

Salt fish The fish is cut open and cleaned, the scales scraped off, the heads and tails removed, and the bodies, after having been split down the centre, placed in jars of salt water for three days. Then it is sprinkled with salt, and exposed to the sun to dry for four or five days. It is then fit for market and export. The *kathabaung* is the only fish subjected to this soaking process. Pomfret, mullet and other fish are generally dried or smoked over fires.

Dried prawns The prawns are spread on mats and exposed to the sun for several days until quite hard and dry. They are then pounded, which knocks off all the skin or husky shell. The husk is sold for manure.

The other principal subsidiary industries are pearling, shell-carving, mining, boat-building and, in the remoter portions of the district, extraction of timber and fibre and a bark called locally "Kyu," which is exported in considerable quantities for use in tanning.

CHAPTER VII.

COMMUNICATIONS.

Extern[al] Before 1865 the state of the district was one of almost complete isolation. The Government steamer "Nemesis" was supposed to visit the port once a month, but no reliance could be placed on the regularity of her arrival.

In 1865 Messrs. Todd, Finlay and Company contracted to run a steamer once a month from Moulmein to Mergui *viâ* Tavoy. In 1872 Captain Bowyers started a company to run between Rangoon and Penang, touching at Mergui, and

the British India at the same time opened a subsidiary coast line. In 1875 the contract with Messrs. Todd Finlay and Company was changed so as to provide for a fortnightly instead of a monthly run. In 1882 the British India Steam Navigation Company agreed to run an additional steamer fortnightly between Rangoon, Mergui and Tavoy. The British India Steam Navigation Company now runs a weekly steamer from Rangoon to Mergui, calling at the mouth of the Tavoy river, and a fortnightly coasting steamer from Moulmein. The weekly service leaves Rangoon on Wednesday morning and reaches Mergui on Friday morning, and returning the same day arrives at Rangoon on Monday morning. The steamer from Moulmein arrives at and leaves Mergui every alternate Tuesday. The trade with Penang and intervening ports to the south is served by a steamer belonging to a Chinese firm which calls in at Victoria Point and Mergui on its way to and back from Penang and Tavoy; also by the British India Steam Navigation Company's paddle boat "Amarapoora," which has its headquarters at Mergui, and at present, though it is hoped that this service will be shortly improved, visits Palaw once a fortnight, returns and then plies to Victoria Point, calling in on its way at Bôkpyin and Karathuri.

ternal.

In the district there is an almost total absence of any roads, a most serious drawback to the opening up of the country. But the problem of communications in the district is essentially a difficult one. Its population of 88,000 is scattered over an area of 9,789 square miles, extending 225 miles from north to south. Its coast is stormy and precludes navigation for small vessels for a period of five months every year. Its rivers, with two exceptions, are obstacles, rather than facilities, to communication. To these must be added its isolated situation and the hilly nature of its interior. In recent years attempts have been made to remove these natural handicaps. A scheme of road construction intending simultaneously to connect Mergui and Tavoy has been drawn up. The important line from Palaw to Pala has been completed and connections between Kyoukpya and Pala, also between Palaw and Palauk, are in contemplation. In the open season of 1908-09 bridle-paths were made between (i) Bôkpyin and Lenya, (ii) Yengan and Karathuri *viâ* Yangwa. It is also proposed to connect up Karathuri with Plylônpaw and Plylônpaw with Maliwun by bridle-paths when money is available. A road has already been completed between Victoria Point and Maliwun. A bridle-path is proposed to

be made from Kadè to Ti, to connect the Tenasserim valley with the Palaw and Mergui Townships, a matter of much importance from an administrative point of view. There are Public Works Department bungalows at Victoria Point and Maliwun; District bungalows are to be found furnished at Palauk, Palaw, Lenya, and unfurnished at Kyoukpya, Pala and Tharabwin. There are telegraph rest-houses between Kyaukpya and Palauk. But outside of Mergui town and Palaw village there are practically no carts, except in a few villages close to Tenasserim which have a few buffalo-carts. Boats are the usual method of transit. Prices depend upon circumstances. For journeys into the district, cooly carriage has to be depended upon, so that notice must be sent beforehand.

CHAPTER VIII.

FAMINE.

Nil.

CHAPTER IX.

ADMINISTRATION.

Genera and Ju cial.

After our occupation, Tenasserim was divided into three districts—Amherst, Tavoy and Mergui, with the headquarters of the Commissioner at Tavoy, subsequently moved up to Moulmein, and directly under the Governor-General of India. Each district was subdivided into divisions or townships, and these again into circles. The officers in charge of districts were styled Assistant to the Commissioner, and supervised the whole administration of their districts. The townships were placed under native officials styled *Gaung Gyôk*, with limited civil and criminal powers. The *Thugyi* had the superintendence of the police, and was vested with powers to settle unimportant civil cases and disputes; subordinate to him was the *Kye-dan-gyi* elected by the people.

A military detachment was maintained at Mergui. The revenue was levied with as light a hand as possible. The system was continually being improved, crime was kept down by the *Thugyi* and *Gaung*, and the District Officer and subordinate native Judicial Officers administered justice, perhaps not with such accuracy of form or such intimate acquaintance with the principles of English law as is now required, but on the whole effectively and with satisfaction to the people.

The supreme control was in the Sudder Adalat in Calcutta. In 1827 the Commissioner was empowered to carry capital sentences into execution without further reference.

In 1861-62 Arakan, Pegu and Tenasserim and Martaban were united and considerable reductions made in the garrison and administrative staff.

In 1875 the judicial courts were regulated by Act XVII of 1875.

In 1876-77 Tavoy Island was transferred from Tavoy to Mergui.

olice nd Jails.

In Tenasserim Division there were 196 interior police, 399 provincial, 200 Karen levies, 404 town police and 240 river police, total 1,439, with two battalions of European infantry, six companies of European artillery, three horse field batteries, ten regiments of native infantry, and the Pegu Sappers Battalion and two companies of Sappers and Miners, detachments of these being stationed in Mergui.

In 1862 the existing police-force was organized under Act V of 1861, and each district was given a Superintendent with subordinate officers.

The civil police-force in 1903-04 consisted of three Inspectors, six Head-constables, 19 Sergeants and 180 men, under the District Superintendent. In 1908 this was increased to 4 Inspectors, 19 Sub-Inspectors, 36 Head-constables and 307 constables.

There are 100 military police employed for guarding treasure and escort duty. A police-station has been established at every township headquarters, and additional posts exist at Palauk, Lenya and Marang.

Besides the training depôt at Mergui, a police school has been established at Victoria Point for the Siamese constables.

Mergui has a jail with accommodation for 74 prisoners. The average number of inmates is about 40. Long-term prisoners, *i.e.*, above five years, are removed to other jails to serve out their sentences.

The telegraph line which at present only extends as far as Mergui, with an intermediate station at Palaw, was first laid in 1898. In the open season of 1908-09 Victoria Point was connected by the wireless telegraphic system with Mergui and the Andaman Islands.

Public Works Department. Lighthouses. Telegraphs. Post Offices.

The post office was established in 1876.

A beacon leading into Mergui harbour was erected about 1900.

The Deputy Commissioner is District Magistrate and District Judge. The Mergui Township Court is presided over by a Judge who sits for 15 days at Tavoy and for 15 days at Mergui, but the Subdivisional and the other Township Courts are presided over by the executive officers concerned.

The Deputy Commissioner is Political Officer for Re-nong and other Siamese States, and owing to the cordial co-operation of the Siamese authorities, the gangs of border robbers who infested the Pakchan river have long since disappeared.

Opium-smuggling on a large scale was carried on in former years by junks from Penang, but has been largely suppressed partly by the excise staff appointed in 1902, but mainly by an adjustment of prices which renders smuggling unprofitable. At present it is practically non-existent. The following are the principal heads under which crime falls in this district:—(i) Grievous hurt cases, (ii) house-breaking. Mergui town is directly responsible for most of this. In 1902 the figures under all heads are so abnormally small that they cannot be considered correct. In 1903 there was an outbreak of crime under all heads. In 1904 offences of house-breaking and thefts were above the average. In 1906 a crusade against bad characters under the preventive sections was vigorously undertaken with satisfactory results. The mixed character of the population, together with the release from occupation of the labourers who toil in the Archipelago at pearling and fishing in the open weather and have no employment in the monsoon, accounts for the criminal character of the town.

CHAPTER X.

Revenue Administration.

For the first few years of our rule the old Burmese custom of levying taxes in kind was resorted to. The

inhabitants of each village were assembled, and from their declarations, compared with books kept by the village headmen, a general average of the produce of grain was estimated and the Government share fixed at one-fifth of the gross produce and required to be paid in kind, remission being granted in cases of crops damaged or destroyed. Other sources of revenue, such as salt-fish, *ngapi* paste, torches, tin, rattan, and cane, were taxed at various rates from 10 to 25 per cent. of the estimated returns, while excise (liquor and opium), farms, turtle banks, the right of collecting edible birds' nests, etc., were leased. The revenue was collected by the *thugyis* or headmen of circles, who were generally elected by the landholders, and who were paid in some cases by a commission on the amount collected, in others by a fixed salary.

In 1842 the system of acre assessment was introduced. The earliest particulars as to the revenue rates imposed that can be traced date from 1858-59.

The area cultivated and the total revenue demand, however, can be traced back to 1854-55.

In 1858-59 the assessment was enhanced, producing an increase of 50 per cent. in the revenue demand.

In 1864-65 the garden assessments were reduced.

In 1872-73 Maliwun Township was brought under ordinary revenue administration, its revenue having previously been leased to a Chinaman.

In 1880-81 a revision of assessment was made concurrently with other Lower Burma districts.

In 1905-06 a revision settlement was completed.

In 1893-96, supplementary survey was introduced. It is not possible to say what rates were fixed on the introduction of the system of acre assessment. They were, however, very moderate. In 1854-55, excluding *taungya* cultivation, a demand of Rs. 24,981 was made from a cultivated area of 21,283 acres. In 1858-59 a revision of rates was made concurrently with a revision in Tavoy district. It was undoubtedly the intention to bring the assessments of the two districts into harmony with each other. Whereas in Tavoy paddy rates were unchanged, garden rates only being enhanced, in Mergui both paddy and garden rates were enhanced, and the resulting increase in the revenue demand was approximately 50 per cent. An uniform rate of Rs. 2-8 per acre was fixed for garden cultivation, and paddy rates of Rs. 2, Rs. 1-12, Rs. 1-8, Rs. 1-4 and Re. 1 per acre were imposed. It has not been found possible to discover on what basis these differential

rates were fixed. All that is traceable on the subject is a paragraph in the Revenue Administration Report of the district for 1860 as follows: "Registers of the *kwins* attached to each village have been prepared as records, and show the names, and areas, cultivated and uncultivated, with rate of assessment in each," whence it may be gathered that the rate varied with the assumed productiveness, though by what standard of comparison this was tested is uncertain. The revenue demand rose from Rs. 26,934 to Rs. 40,375, and the incidence per acre from Rs. 1·16 to Rs. 1·73.

In the garden revision in 1864-65 an attempt was made by the Government to revise garden assessments on the basis of the highest paddy rates in the vicinity. The Deputy Commissioner protested strenuously on the grounds that the best gardens were found in the circles containing the poorest paddy land and excellent paddy land in the neighbourhood of the poorest gardens.

The final result was that rates of Rs. 1-8 in ten circles and Re. 1 in five circles were substituted for the previously uniform garden rate of Rs. 2-8 which was allowed to remain in force in seven circles only. Simultaneously the rates on miscellaneous cultivation were reduced from Rs. 2-8 per acre to Rs. 1-8, 8 annas and 6 annas in different circles. "Garden cultivation" was then held to include the cultivation of—

(1) Cocoanut,	(4) Nut,
(2) *Durian*,	(5) Dani palm (Nipa fructicans),
(3) Jack,	(6) Betel vine,

while miscellaneous crops included—

(1) Sugarcane,	(3) Cotton,
(2) Tobacco,	(4) Vegetables, etc.

Taungya rates were raised from 8 annas to an uniform rate of Re. 1 per acre with the express intention of putting a heavy burden on a wasteful method of cultivation.

It is worthy to note that the 5,692 acres of *taungya* prior to the enhancement increased to 6,274 acres in the year succeeding and to 9,006 in the year after the enhancement. Ultimately, however, the increased taxation on *taungya* was successful in reducing the acreage, which dropped to 2,769 in 1868-69. The rates fixed at the settlement of 1879-80 came into force the following year; the same maximum and minimum rates of Rs. 2 and Re. 1

were retained, but the maximum garden rate of Rs. 2-8 was raised to Rs. 3.

—	1863-64.	1864-65.	1879-80.	1880-81.	1863-64.	1864-65.	1879-80.	1880-81.
					Total demand.			
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.		Rs.		
Paddy ...	20,019	20,770	34,497	35,410	45,112	42,171	69,093	79,697
Garden ..	6,160	6,368	9,665	9,807				
Miscellaneous	256	204	185	177				

Allowing for the increase in area the degree of enhancement for paddy land was 10 per cent., for garden land 19 per cent., and for all classes of cultivation 12 per cent.

The changes effected by the introduction of supplementary assessment were as follows:—

—	No. of *kwins* brought under supplementary survey.	Total cultivated area.	Total revenue derived.
		Acres.	Rs.
1892-93 ...	...	53,714	98,088
1893-94 ...	47	57,112	1,05,413
1894-95 ...	437	70,337	1,30,212
1895-96 ..	147	70,882	1,31,667

The abnormal increase in area in the year 1894-95 and the equally abnormal absence of material increase in 1895-96 require explanation. Private pasture lands not hitherto assessed were surveyed and included in the assessment of 1894-95. In 1895-96 the Deputy Commissioner caused them to be excluded.

The total increase for the three years amounts to 32 per cent. in area and 34 per cent. in revenue demand. The result was shortly as follows :—

Paddy cultivation.

(*a*) An initially low degree of assessment with incidence of only Rs. 1·18 per acre.

(*b*) A heavy enhancement of 50 per cent. in 1858-59.

(*c*) A moderate enhancement of 10 per cent. in 1880-81.

(*d*) A considerable enhancement of 25 per cent. owing to the introduction of correct survey.

Garden cultivation.

(*a*) An initially low rate of assessment.

(*b*) A heavy enhancement to the uniform rate of Rs. 2-8 in 1858-59.

(*c*) A reduction of 14 per cent. in 1864-65.

(*d*) An enhancement of 19 per cent. in 1880-81.

(*e*) A considerable enhancement of 25 per cent. with the introduction of supplementary survey without any change of rates.

When the supplementary survey was introduced there were then 631 *kwins*, with a total area of 70,882 acres until 1905-06. When the survey of 37 *kwins* was revised, nine new *kwins*, with a total area of 1,444 acres, were introduced.

The supplementary operations of 1905-06 divided the *kwins* into four tracts. The tables below give number of *kwins* and area of paddy cultivation in each :—

——	No. of *kwins*.	Area of paddy.
		Acres.
A	139	26,078
B	88	18,628
C	219	15,719
D	198	4,524
Total ...	644	64,949

The rates for paddy cultivation fixed being—

Paddy.		Present demand.	Proposed.
Class I.	*Class II.*		
1·87 to 3·87 ...	1·37 to 2·75 ...	105,225	173,994

the degree of enhancement being a general average of 65·35 per cent.

For Mayin paddy the rate was fixed at Rs. 2-8 per acre.

	Class I.	Class II.	Class III.
For garden ...	Rs. 2 to 6	1·75 to 4	1 to 3

For Miscellaneous cultivation Re. 1 per acre; for *Dani* cultivation Rs. 1-8 to Rs. 4.

CHAPTER XI.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

The only municipality is Mergui. It was formed into a municipality in 1887. The average receipts for the ten years ending 1901 were Rs. 27,600. In 1903-04 the income was Rs. 34,700, of which Rs. 14,700 came from a tax on houses and lands, Rs. 9,200 from market and Rs. 6,800 from lighting and conservancy Rs. 5,800, lighting Rs. 4,300, hospital Rs. 3,900, roads Rs. 3,700, markets Rs. 3,000, and schools Rs. 3,000.

In 1907 the income was Rs. 40,662, of which Rs. 23,984 came from Municipal rates and taxes, including a tax on houses and lands, a tax on animals and vehicles, lighting rate and conservancy and the latrine rates, Rs. 49 from pounds, Rs. 10,884 from revenue derived from Municipal property and powers apart from taxation, including rents of lands, sale-proceeds and produce of lands, conservancy receipts, fees and revenue from markets and slaughter-houses,

process fees, pawnshop license, fees and revenue from Medical Institution, fees and fines under the Municipal and other Acts; Rs. 5,511 from grants and contributions, and Rs. 234 from miscellaneous, other items.

The chief items of expenditure were: general administration and collection charges Rs. 4,835, lighting Rs. 4,900, conservancy Rs. 9,044, hospital Rs. 6,458, markets Rs. 2,822, roads Rs. 1,610, and schools Rs. 5,400.

The house and land tax was until recently levied at 5 per cent. on the annual value of the buildings and lands. The form of taxation is now—(*a*) a tax on lands covered by buildings, single storey at a rate not exceeding 3 pies per square foot per annum, double storey at a rate not exceeding 4 pies per square foot; (*b*) a tax on lands not covered by buildings at a rate not exceeding Rs. 10 per acre per annum. It is probable, however, that these arrangements may have to be reconsidered.

There are two bazaars, one known as the brick or fish bazaar or Taik Ze, on the shore, and the other the Zedan Bazaar, behind the ridge in the centre of the town. The hospital, school, municipal office, and court-house are all built either near or on the ridge. A new hospital built on modern principles is, however, nearly completed. This is situated inland at the back of the town.

The usual taxes are imposed. As the expenses are heavy, little has been done to improve the place. The cost of day and night conservancy usually exceeds the receipts upon those accounts.

A scheme for the reclamation of Noukle Quarter has been taken in hand, and two tube wells have been sunk on the ridge to supply the water for the proposed Mergui Town Water Scheme.

Government has contributed generously to all these schemes.

Distric[t] Local Fund.

In 1903-04 the District Cess Fund had an income of Rs. 18,700. The normal annual income of the fund at present is about Rs. 29,000 (apart from special subventions from Government).

The income is devoted to the maintenance of the district hospitals, and the vaccination and veterinary staffs, education, and to improving communications. The fund is by no means a rich one: the permanent charges under the heads of Medical, Educational, and staff, are a tax on its resources, and when these have been defrayed there is little available to devote to the urgent task of improving the internal communications of the district.

CHAPTER XII.

EDUCATION.

The standard of education is comparatively low for Burma. In 1901 only 20 per cent. (33·3 males and 5·4 females) were able to read and write. In 1904 there were 7 secondary, 45 primary, and 59 elementary (private) schools with 3,775 school children, including 542 females, on their rolls.

In 1908 there were 10 secondary, 53 primary, and 79 elementary (private) schools with 3,873 scholars, including 863 females, on their rolls.

The number of pupils in 1891 was 1,985; 2,379 in 1901, and 3,873 in 1908.

The expenditure on education was Rs. 13,471 in 1903-04, Provincial funds providing Rs. 4,197, Municipal fund Rs. 3,000, fees Rs. 3,568, and District Cess Fund Rs. 2,706.

In 1907-08 the total expenditure was Rs. 20,600, Provincial fund providing Rs. 7,519, Municipal Rs. 3,793, District Cess Fund Rs. 2,881, fees Rs. 6,407.

CHAPTER XIII.

PUBLIC HEALTH.

ublic alth nd mate.

Proximity to the sea and a southerly latitude tend to make the seasons differ less when contrasted with each other than is usual in Lower Burma. As before explained the rainy seasons extend both ways into the drier months; similarly there is not the same marked difference in temperature between the hot and cold seasons. From November to February it is much hotter than, and from March to May it is not quite so hot as, in more northerly and land-locked districts.

Generally the health of the inhabitants is good, but there are isolated localities where a very low standard of health prevails.

In such cases the diseases of beri-beri, malaria, diarrhœa, and rheumatism are due rather to the exposure, poor food and bad conditions prevailing in the pearling, fishing, and *ngapi* industries than to the climate.

ospitals nd Dis- ensaries.

The district contains two hospitals with accommodation for 34 in-patients. In 1903, 12,846 cases were treated, of whom 512 were in-patients and 383 operations were

performed. In 1906, 12,493 cases were treated, of whom 786 were in-patients and 202 operations were performed at a total cost of Rs. 6,433.

In 1907, 13,079 cases were treated, of whom 848 were in-patients and 216 operations were performed at a total cost of Rs. 7,647, chiefly met by local funds.

A new hospital at Mergui is about to be erected, and two dispensaries, one at Palaw, the other at Bôkpyin, have been erected.

Vaccination is only compulsory in Mergui town. In 1903-04, 4,388 persons were successfully vaccinated, representing 49 per 1,000 of population. In 1906-07, 5,234 were successfully vaccinated, and in 1907-08, 6,491. Vaccination.

Primary vaccination per 1,000 of population during 1906-07 and 1907-08 was 170·22 and 170·52 respectively.

CHAPTER XIV.

MINOR ARTICLES.

Subdivisions.—Mergui and Victoria Point. SUBDIVISIONS.

Townships.—Mergui, Palaw, Tenasserim, Bôkpyin and Maliwun. Mergui.

The district has two subdivisions, one of which, Mergui, is divided into the townships of Mergui, Palaw, Tenasserim and Bôkpyin, each under a Township Officer.

The other subdivision, called Victoria Point, consists of one township, Maliwun, which has no separate Township Officer. Below the Township Officers are 178 village headmen. These are taking the place of the old circle *thugyis*, of whom only one remains. Victoria Point.

The district forms a portion of the Tavoy Public Works Division (headquarters Tavoy) and of the South Tenasserim Division Forest Division (headquarters Tavoy). The Deputy Commissioner, in addition to his judicial and revenue duties, discharges those of Collector of Customs and Port Officer.

Mergui Township.—This comprises the most important islands of the Archipelago and a small piece of the mainland in the neighbourhood of Mergui, and is for the most part hilly and covered with forests. It extends from 11° 25′ to 12° 47′ N. and from 97° 30′ to 98° 58′ E., and has an area of 1,879 square miles. TOWNSHIPS. Mergui.

The eastern islands lying at the mouth of the Tenasserim and Lenya rivers are in muddy waters teeming with fish. They support a large fishing population, but only King Island is cultivated. The population was 32,448 in 1891 and 43,070 in 1901, when the township contained 152 villages and hamlets, besides Mergui, population 11,987, the headquarters.

Outside the town 90 per cent. of the people speak Burmese, the rest being Karens, Chinese or Salôns. Of the Burmans nearly half are fishermen. The cultivated area in 1903-04 was 64 square miles, of which about 41 was paddy and the rest orchards or palm groves. The land revenue amounted in the same year to Rs. 94,400. In 1907-08 it was about 1½ lakhs of rupees.

law. *Palaw Township.*—The most northerly township bordering on the Tavoy District. It lies on the mainland between 12° 20′ and 13° 28′ N. and 98° 33′ and 90° E., and includes the inhabited islands of Mali (known generally as Tavoy Island) and Cabosa as far out as 97° 53′ E. Its total area is 785 square miles, hilly throughout and forest-clad. The population in 1891 was 19,447 and in 1901 22,442, about a third speaking Karen and the rest a dialect of Burmese differing from that in use in Mergui and unintelligible to any ordinary Burman. There are 115 villages and hamlets. The headquarters are at Palaw, a village of about 2,000 inhabitants and a port of call for a fortnightly coasting steamer from Moulmein exporting rice, fish-paste, salt and jaggery. The township had in 1903-04 37 square miles under cultivation, mostly rice, yielding Rs. 39,100 land revenue proper. In 1907-08 the land revenue proper was Rs. 65,734.

nas-im. *Tenasserim Township.*—The largest and most easterly township and the only one without a seaboard. It lies between 11° 11′ and 13° 28′ N. and 98° 51′ and 99° 40′ E., an area of 4,033 square miles.

It is a stretch of very hilly jungle country sparsely populated, with the Tenasserim river running through it. The population in 1891 was 8,385, and in 1901 10,712, of whom 43 in every hundred spoke Burmese, 40 Karens, 16 Siamese, about one in 100 speaks Chinese. The Burmese spoken is much purer than in Mergui, perhaps owing to there being a large number of the descendants of Alaungpaya's army of invasion. There are 114 villages and hamlets including Tenasserim, the headquarters of the township. The cultivated area in 1903-04 was 22 square miles, of which rather more than half was under paddy and the rest orchards and palm groves.

The land revenue proper in 1903-04 amounted to Rs. 20,442 and in 1907-08 to Rs. 27,272.

Bôkpyin

Bôkpyin Township.—A township lying on the mainland between 10° 35′ and 11° 51′ N. and 98° 27′ and 99° 14′ E., and including islands extending to 97° 54′ E. Its area, with the islands, is 2,605 square miles. The township is a mass of forest-clad hills within a sea fringe of mangrove swamps, widening out at the estuary of the Lenya river which flows through rocky gorges with occasional narrow strips of level land. Along the coast is an immense shoal, almost bare at low tide, which makes it impossible for steamers of any but the smallest size to approach the headquarters. Further south, however, there is a good anchorage at Karathuri, a tin-mining centre, about 40 miles from Bôkpyin. In clear waters among wooded isles with sandy beaches are the pearling grounds. The population in 1891 was 5,749, and in 1901 7,255, of whom 18 per cent. were returned as speaking Burmese, 9 Karens, 53 Siamese, and 20 Malay and other languages. The Malays and most of the Burmans live along the coast, the Siamese inland on the water-courses, and the Karens in the hills. The tin mines are manned mostly by Chinese. The islands are uninhabited save for the roving population of Salôns. There are 63 villages and hamlets. The headquarters are at Outer Bôkpyin, a village with a population of 387. The cultivated area in 1903-04 was nine square miles, of which about two-thirds was under paddy and the rest orchards and palm-groves. The land revenue proper in 1903-04 amounted to Rs. 7,749, in 1907-08 to Rs. 13,069.

Victoria Point Subdn.

Victoria Point Subdivision.—A subdivision of the Mergui district, conterminous with the Maliwun Township. Its headquarters are at Victoria Point.

Maliwun (Siamese Mali-wan).

Maliwun Township.—The southernmost township of the district lying on the mainland between 9° 58′ and 10° 55′ N. and 96° 27′ and 98° 56′ E., and including islands which extend to 97° 44′ E. and 9° 38′ N. Its area is 989 square miles. The eastern boundary runs for most of the way along the Pakchan river, on the other side of which is the Siamese State of Renong or Ranaung. The headquarters were moved in 1891 from Maliwun, the principal tin-mining centre in the district situated on a tributary of the Pakchan, to the healthier and more accessible Victoria Point at the southern extremity of the mainland. Except for a few Government officials and their families, there are no Burmans in the township, the population of which was 7,719 in 1891 and 5,265 in 1901 and is composed

of Siamese in the rice-plains on the right bank of the Pakchan; Chinese in the mining camps, Malays along the coast, and Salôns about the islands. The township contains 14 villages and hamlets. Until the time of Alaungpaya the Pakchan was an important trade route. The country seems to have been completely depopulated by that monarch's devastations, and was left a good deal to itself till 50 years ago when immigration had led to such a series of dacoities and piracies that measures had to be concerted between the British and Siamese Governments for the maintenance of order. In 1859 the population was only 733. The next year the tract was leased to a Chinaman, who took over the administration for ten years, but internal brawls in 1861 led to the establishment of a frontier police under a European Inspector and later to the appointment of a Resident Magistrate. The village of Victoria Point called by the Siamese Kawsong, by the Malays Pulodua (both meaning two islands), and by the Burmese Kawthaung, a corruption of the Siamese name, contains about 80 houses. Except for the rice-plain on the Upper Pakchan and a few small patches elsewhere, the whole township is under dense forest. The cultivated area in 1903-04 was seven square miles, and the land revenue proper Rs. 4,600. The total revenue raised in the township in the same year amounted to Rs. 30,000. In 1907-08 the land revenue proper was Rs. 7,567 and the total land revenue Rs. 14,116.

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The headquarters of the district, situated in 12° 26′ N. and 98° 36′ E. on the Tenasserim coast just outside the principal mouth of the Tenasserim river. The principal Government buildings are on a ridge parallel to the coast and, rising abruptly from the sea, afford a lovely view of the harbour backed by the pagoda-crowned hills of Pataw and Patit on the islands opposite and the distant heights of King Island beyond. The inner town is closely packed, the houses being huddled together without any regard for sanitation, especially on the foreshore where they are built over the mud. In the suburbs the buildings are scattered among orchards.

The population of the town fell from 9,737 in 1872 to 8,633 in 1881, but rose to 10,137 in 1891 and 11,987 in 1901. The census is usually taken, however, at a time when fishermen and their families who number several thousands are living in the islands. During the monsoon they move into the town, bringing up the population to about 18,000. The population is very mixed. To a European resident most families seem to have either Chinese or Indian blood in them, but the census figures show only 1,425 Mahomedans and

705 Hindus in the town, while the total number of persons in the district returned as Chinese is only 2,104, including the miners. No doubt most of these are in the town, many Chinese miners being imported for the monsoon only. Practically no persons at the 1901 census called themselves Siamese or Karens, but there must be a very large mixture of these races in the population, as well as the half Chinaman, the results of inter-marriage with the Burmans, known locally as Baba. These latter generally call themselves Burmans.

Few Malays reside in the town. The Burmese name of *Mergui is written Mrit* but pronounced Beik. The origin of the name used by Europeans (and also by the Malays and natives of India) is quite unknown. It is by no means certain that it is connected with the Siamese name, for no plausible explanation of the second syllable has ever been given.

Mergui has a port, the income of which has risen from Rs. 3,500 a year to Rs. 8,100 in 1904-05 and fell to Rs. 7,600 and Rs. 5,650 in 1905-06 and 1906-07 respectively ; but in 1907-08 it rose to Rs. 19,500, this was owing mainly to the imposition of landing and shipping charges levied which amounted to Rs. 14,900, a considerable proportion of which will have to be refunded as illegally levied. The present income is probably abcut Rs. 7,500. Passengers and cargo from foreign ports are landed at the main wharf, which was built of stone in 1900 at a cost of Rs. 38,000. Cargo from Rangoon and coast ports usually goes to a smaller wharf in the south of the town, and there are in addition numerous private jetties. The total value of the exports in 1903-04 was 16 lakhs, of which 11 lakhs went to Indian Ports and 5 to the Straits and England. The imports were valued at 14 lakhs, of which 11½ came from Indian Ports. In 1906-07 the total value of the exports was Rs. 15,12,587, of which 11 lakhs went to Indian Ports and the balance to the Straits and United Kingdom. The total imports were valued at Rs. 14,65,275, 1¼ lakhs being from the Straits and United Kingdom and the remainder being from Indian Ports.

The principal exports are fish-paste and salt-fish sent mostly to Rangoon and Moulmein, and pearls which are bought on the spot by merchants from Bombay, and mother-of-pearl shells which are exported to the United Kingdom. Cotton piece-goods and provisions, sugar, and liquors are the most important imports, and come mainly from Rangoon.

Tenasserim Village.—Headquarters of the Tenasserim township, situated in 12° 6′ N. and 99° 3′ E. at the Tenasserim Village.

Burmese Tanin-thayi). confluence of the Great and Little Tenasserim rivers, 45 miles up-stream from Mergui. The village is on low ground on the site of the ancient city; on a height above it is the court-house, commanding a fine view of both rivers and the forest-clad hills around. For several hundred years Tenasserim was the principal port of Siam and the gateway of the most direct route to the Far East, commodities being brought to it by sea from India and the Persian Gulf to meet those carried overland from Siam and China. The overland route cannot now be traced. The elephant mart is still pointed out across the river, and the remains of walls enclose an area of one square mile, not four, as has been recently stated. In the centre of the enclosure stands a granite pillar which is variously ascribed to the Siamese who are said to have founded the city in 1373 and to the Burmese conqueror, Alaungpaya, who destroyed Tenasserim on his victorious march through Siam in 1759. *It is* much visited by women, who plaster it with gold leaf. On the same hill as the court-house are two ancient pagodas, near one of which was recently found a stone inscription commemorating the building of the pagoda by King Byinnya Ran, who reigned at Pegu from 1491 to 1526. The village now contains barely a hundred houses.

Opposite the Tenasserim landing-stage the remains of the ancient shipyard are also clearly visible.

CHAPTER XV.

List of Officers who held charge of the District.

Serial No.	Name of Officer.	Date of receiving charge.	Date of handing over.
1	Mr. H. G. Batten ...	8th Jany. 1890 ...	10th Sept. 1894.
2	Captain A. B. Pritchard.	11th Sept. 1894 ...	13th Augt. 1896.
3	Mr. R. C. Stevenson	14th Augt. 1896 ...	28th Dec. 1896.
4	" L. H. Saunders	29th Dec. 1896 ...	5th April 1897.
5	" R. C. Stevenson	6th April 1897 ...	28th Feby. 1899.
6	" E. A. Moore ...	27th Feby. 1900 ...	26th Nov. 1900.
7	" D. Ross ...	27th Nov. 1900 ...	20th Jany. 1902.
8	" G. E. R. Grant Brown.	21st Jany. 1902 ...	22nd Augt. 1904.
9	" H. S. Pratt ...	23rd Augt. 1904 ...	25th Dec. 1904.
10	" G. E. R. Grant Brown.	26th Dec. 1904 ...	4th May 1906.
11	" T. J. Metcalfe	26th May 1906 ...	20th Augt. 1908.
12	" C. R. Wilkinson	26th Sept. 1908 ...	......

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(3) Burma Census Report, 1901.

(4) Report on the Settlement Operations in the Mergui District, Season 1905-06.

(5) Bound " Old Letters Books " for 1857—60, 1860—62 and 1868—70.

(6) " The Salôns," by W. J. S. Carrapiett, Ethnographic Survey of India. No. 2, Burma.

(7) "The Selungs of the Mergui Archipelago," by Dr. Anderson.

ALPHABETICAL INDEX.

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